

LECTURE NOTES

"What Every Supervisor Should Know About Personnel Management"

Purpose: The theme of this lecture is the supervisor's awareness of his employees as individuals. Its purpose is to describe the supervisor's responsibilities for the management of the employees he supervises, to suggest the types of problems he might expect to arise, and to acquaint him with the staff services and facilities available to assist him. It does not cover such matters as work management and control, programming and planning, and other elements of the supervisor's total job which focus on the job or product rather than the personnel which produce it.

General Outline

The supervisor must deal with the employee as a total personality. Performance deficiencies on the job may be manifestations of off-job problems, of mal-assignments, of ill health. The evaluation of an employee's performance in a given job is pertinent to planning his development for future assignments. All of these matters are so closely inter-related that a simple, neat grouping is not realistic: the supervisor will meet them in many and varied combinations. The topical headings used and the points covered under them were selected for convenience in presenting the material.

Part I discusses the employee as a person. What should the supervisor know about him personally, his health, his habits, his family situation, etc. What should the supervisor know about his work attitudes and habits, his relation with co-workers, etc. What does the supervisor do to help an employee who has a personal problem? How should he handle disciplinary problems?

Part II discusses the employee as a worker. It is concerned with evaluating the employee's performance and potential and planning for his training and development. How does the supervisor counsel the employee whose performance is inadequate? How does he counsel the employee who has reached his peak?

Part III provides a brief description of staff services and facilities available to supervisors and a review of employee benefit and service programs.

Part IV is a summary in which the supervisors responsibilities for personnel management are reviewed in the context of their importance to the Agency in achieving the best possible utilization of its personnel resources and of their significance in personnel security.

TOPICAL OUTLINE

Part I. The Employee as a Person

A. Off-the-Job

1. What the supervisor should know about the personal circumstances of his subordinates. The supervisor does not need to know every detail of the personal lives of his subordinates. However, he might use the following as a check list of the kinds of items which may be important and inquire in detail about those which appear to be problems to the employee.

- a. Marital status
- b. Children
- c. Dependent relatives
- d. Health problems of employee or dependents
- e. Housing: apartment; home-renting or buying; general location
- f. Car; transportation to work (car pool, bus, etc.)
- g. Hobbies; recreational preferences
- h. Outside job (if employee has a second job, what is it; why does he consider it necessary)
- i. Social activities: nature; does circle of acquaintances extend beyond Agency associates?
- j. Wife's employment: is wife (husband) employed; where?
- k. Financial management: does he seem to be handling his obligations without excessive strain; installment buying; debts.
- l. Insurance: does he have health and life insurance?

2. How does the supervisor learn about the employee's personal life?

This depends on many factors. Each supervisor should develop his own techniques. He should avoid giving the impression of prying but should display an interest which will encourage employees to discuss their personal problems with him. It is not necessary that a supervisor visit an employee's home or socialize with him to establish a friendly rapport. Sometimes the supervisor may find it helpful to talk to other employees about a particular employee; however, he should be very careful about doing so -- he should not encourage gossip, tale-bearing, or establishing any employee as his "eyes and ears." If a supervisor has reason to believe an employee has a serious problem, he should feel free to consult his superiors and staff officers for advice.

B. On-the-Job

1. What does the supervisor need to know about his employees on-the-job? This question is concerned with work habits and attitudes as separate from competence, quality of performance, and evaluation of potential. The following list is suggestive of points which the supervisor should keep in mind. An important point is that any sudden and unexplained change in an employee's work habits and attitudes is significant and should be a flag to the supervisor to seek an explanation.

- a. Punctuality: is employee usually early, just on time, or tardy? Does he always leave with the "quitting bell," stay late?
- b. Leave: does he take annual leave in small, unscheduled amounts? Does he usually request leave in advance? Does he take a week or more for a vacation? Does he take sick leave frequently? In what amounts? Is it satisfactorily explained?
- c. On job conduct: Is he disciplined in office behavior? Are his dress and decorum appropriate to the kind of work performed in his office?
- d. Inter-personal relations: How does he get along with co-workers? Is he friendly, well-liked, active in office-related social affairs? Is he reserved? Is he overtly hostile to co-workers? Does he work best on his own?
- e. Discipline: does he accept and conform to necessary office discipline? Does he accept suggestions and guidance?
- f. Morale: Does his morale appear good, poor? Why? Does he seem to like his job?

2. How does the supervisor learn about the employee on-the-job? How does he deal with disciplinary problems?

It is much simpler than learning about him off-the-job. It does require observation, attention, and interest. When an employee's on-the-job behavior changes suddenly and without reason, the supervisor should try to find out the why. Often, a talk with the employee will be sufficient to correct lapses. If it is not, the supervisor may need help and should seek it from his supervisors and staff officers.

Part II. The Employee as a Worker

This part of the lecture would be concerned with evaluating the quality of the employee's performance and his potential. It would cover the need for the supervisor to:

1. Learn about the employee's background of education and experience.
2. Identify his strengths and weaknesses.
3. Identify areas in which he needs further training and development.
4. Suggest ways in which the employee can be given opportunities to realize his potential.

While the role of the supervisor in providing an informed evaluation of the employee-at-work cannot be over-emphasized, the role of the career service in planning his training and development is of special importance.

Part III. Staff Services and Facilities

The Medical Staff and the Offices of Personnel and Security would present short briefings on their services and facilities in relation to the supervisor's responsibilities for his people. Also, if as has been suggested a separate lecture would be given for each major component, this section would include a brief description of the career service mechanism of that component and its functioning in relation to employee evaluation and development.

Part IV. Summary

In this section, the emphasis would be placed on the reasons why supervisors are concerned about their employees as individuals. Some of the points which might be covered are as follows:

1. Especial concern of an intelligence agency with the personal circumstances of its employees for security reasons.
2. Objective of offering each employee an opportunity to make his maximum contribution to the Agency.
3. Significance of the supervisor's role in (a) maintaining personnel security, (b) creating a job climate conducive to highly effective performance, (c) identifying employees who should be given developmental and training opportunities and those who should be eliminated as ineffective.